

# THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.

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## BIOGRAPHY :—ANDREAS ROMBERG.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN FOR THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.]

ANDREAS ROMBERG was born in 1767, at Vechte, near Munster, in Hanover, of a family in which musical talent seemed to be hereditary. His father, Gerhard Heinrich, was a distinguished clarinet player; and his uncle, Anton, the father of the famous Bernhard Romberg, the creator and unsurpassed master of modern violoncello playing, was equally distinguished on the bassoon. Andreas also appeared born for the art; for, from his earliest youth, he gave proofs of the musical talent that was in him, by his progress in the art of violin playing. In their seventh year, both cousins, (for Bernhard was born about half a year later than Andreas) played for the first time in public; and from that time made with their fathers several journeys, giving concerts with great applause. The electoral prince, Maximilian Joseph, brother to the emperor Joseph the Second of Austria, a great patron of music, took them in 1790 into his Chapel in Bonn, and provided for their further musical education. His Chapel was however dissolved, when he was obliged to fly from the invading French revolutionary army. The two cousins went with the father Anton to Hamburg, where they were engaged in the orchestra of the Opera, and soon enjoyed uni-

versal respect. Here they published their first compositions. In 1795 the two cousins made a great journey through Germany to Italy, establishing every where the highest reputation by their masterly playing, and especially by the beautifully united, interwoven, and blended manner in which they played together on their two instruments : there seemed to be such a spirit of unity and harmony in them, that they were generally taken for brothers. The excitable, enthusiastic Italians, in particular, praised the beautiful tone and the fine cantabile of their performances. On their return, they made in Vienna the acquaintance of Haydn, who received them very kindly, procuring for them the best reception in the first houses. After hearing Andreas's first Quartettos, he used to call him his son, which, in his style of composition, he in fact was at that time. They returned to Hamburg in 1797, where Andreas remained, devoting his time to composition, while Bernhard in 1799 went to Paris. He composed in this time his excellent Psalm *Dixit Dominus*, (although it was published much later) which gained him a public prize, that was offered for the best church composition, and had excited general interest. In 1800, immediately after he had married, he followed the invitation of his cousin to come to Paris ; where he composed the Opera *Don Mendoze*, and published several other compositions. But in 1802 he again returned to Hamburg, where he established himself permanently. Happy in his domestic relations, and universally esteemed and beloved in the whole city, he found here time to write a great many compositions of various kinds, while he maintained himself by instruction, principally of those who studied the art, and he brought up several distinguished artists. In 1809, he received from the university of Kiel, without his solicitation, the diploma of Doctor of the Liberal Arts, and in particular of Music. In 1815 he complied with an invitation to Gotha, as chapel master in the Duke's Chapel, in the place of Spohr ; where he lived for the rest of his days, more engaged in composing than in practical music. In his latter days he lost the even happy disposition which had carried him through his life ; he became homesick for his beloved Hamburg, grew hypocondriac, and found enjoyment only in the most industrious labors of composition ; which of course increased the dyspeptic complaints under which he suffered. He died in November 1821, leaving a disconsolate widow with ten unprovided children, and no property ; for, the only opportunity he had for acquiring a small

property, viz., giving lessons while he lived at Hamburg, he did not embrace with sufficient zeal; as the more artistic occupation of composing was more congenial to his taste and feelings. Numerous concerts, given for the benefit of the family in the larger cities of the continent, and even in London, showed the high esteem in which the artist and his compositions every where stood.

His fame as performer on the violin was formerly spread over the greater part of Europe. His tone was grand, full, and finely varied in expression: his passages were distinct, determined, and sonorous: his style approached that of Benda; in the Allegro, vigorous; and more energetically entering into the spirit of the composition, than astonishing by particular effects; in the Adagio, noble, with portamento, manly yet soft, rather moving the feelings than exciting them. In the Quartetto his playing was truly admirable. As composer, he is known to every body who knows any thing about modern music. His compositions, in number more than 150, are spread over the whole musical world, and have affected thousands, exciting, cultivating them both for the art and for enjoying them.

His talent was on the whole more directed to instrumental than to vocal composition. His whole mind, and his imagination, were too serene and placid, to make him entirely succeed in such compositions as Operas. In his other vocal pieces with orchestral accompaniment, his Song of the Bell, his Power of Song, his Longings, the Transient and the Eternal, and the Harmony of the Spheres, he succeeded better; and especially by his ever-beautiful and flowing melodies, and by his finely adapted and transcendently clear orchestral accompaniments: but in those kinds of composition where he has opportunity to develop the secret resources of his artistical studies, that is, in the instrumental Quartetto, and its kindred compositions, he shines most.

From his style of writing it evidently appears, that Mozart and Haydn were his patterns. He stands between the two; but he is never their mere imitator; he never wants flowing smoothness and originality; and even those forms which are favorites with him, the fugue, and variations in the fugue style, are always original, full of spirit and of art. We must therefore place him among the first of those composers of our times, who have had a true vocation for the art; and he will hold his firm and honorable position in the history of art, while thousands of our present brilliant stars will fade, and sink into oblivion.

## ON CONCERTS.

The name *concert*, being derived from the Latin word '*concertare*'—to contend, to vie with—implies, that several persons are engaged in it, who unite in the performance, and vie with each other in the most perfect production of a composition. A series of pieces of music, performed by a single musician before an audience, cannot therefore be properly called a Concert.

In Europe, the full orchestra is generally employed at the present time in concerts; whether they be concerts of musical societies, or of musical men; whether they be sacred concerts, or vocal or instrumental concerts: and most certainly the orchestra is the proper material for a concert. In our own country, however, the employment of a full orchestra is always expensive, and often altogether impracticable; and moreover, orchestral music is neither understood and appreciated by the public, nor is it ever brought out in that style of uniform and effective performance, that commands attention and interest.

The means for a concert are therefore far more varied in Europe than with us; and so is their object; which may be either the performance of greater compositions, such as *Oratorios*, or that of mixed instrumental and vocal compositions, such as *Symphonies*, *Overtures*, concerted vocal pieces, &c.; or it may be the exhibition of rare talents, either vocal or instrumental.

Where the performance does not consist of one single greater composition, the greatest care must be taken by the director, *in the selection and arrangement of the pieces to be performed*. His chief object must not only be a pleasing and beautiful entertainment for the audience, but also the cultivation of their taste and feeling for the art. This cannot be done by mere solo performances, whose object generally is more to astonish by execution, than to touch the heart, and give a real treat of the power and effect of art to the soul. They should most certainly not be excluded from a concert: on the contrary, they are very useful, to bring variety into the performance, and to create emulation. They should not, however, form the chief part of the performances; which should consist of concerted vocal or instrumental pieces, such as *Choruses*, *Symphonies*, *Overtures*, *Quintettos*, *Quartettos*, &c. The director must therefore not merely take the pleasure of the great mass of the public

as a criterion for his selection; but with a due regard for this, in order not to drive the audience away from the concert, and thus to frustrate its design altogether, he must so plan it as to raise the public taste for the art. He must therefore take care—first, not to give too much: it is not *quantity* that is required, but *quality*: let the audience leave the concert desiring to hear more, rather than over-satiated; it will be better for the art, and for the artist too:—second, not to bring the long and heavy pieces at the end of the concert, when the ear and the mind begin to grow weary:—third, to give a pleasing variety of brilliant and more elaborate pieces:—fourth, not to break up a Symphony or a Concerto, and give only pieces of them; they are written as one whole, and ought to be performed as such. We would recommend a selection like the following. First Part, an entire Symphony. Second Part, an Overture, a Vocal Solo piece, an Instrumental Solo piece, a Concerted Vocal piece with orchestra.

The attention of the director must next be turned to *a careful rehearsal*, as well of the single parts, as of the whole. In any greater performance, the director must study the composition himself, in order to direct every Solo as well as Choral performer in the proper expression of his part; for it is mainly by his activity, skill and exactness in the rehearsals, that unity in the performance is to be effected. In the concert itself, he must preserve a dignified calmness; beating the time with the full score before him, so as to be able to detect, and quietly to point out to the individual performer, any mistake or inaccuracy.

The leader must coöperate with the director, following his directions, and communicating them to the Orchestra; and especially by his own playing he must move the whole Orchestra to energy or softness, as may be required. The individual members of the Orchestra must have their eyes constantly on both, and follow the playing of the leader in his more particular expression, while they take from the director the modulations of time and of the general character of the piece.

The position and right proportion of the Orchestra and Singers is the next important object. They must be so placed, that the *tutti* preserves the greatest unity in its effect upon the audience. The chief condition, and a sine qua non, is, that every individual member can see the director as well as the leader. The orchestra ought therefore to be amphitheatrical; having the Director in front,

turned towards the Orchestra ; and the Leader at the head of the first violins, immediately at his left ; the second violins at his right ; behind the first violins, the flutes and oboes ; and behind the second violins, the clarinets and bassoons. In the middle, between these two files, the double basses and violoncellos must be extended down the whole length ; and behind, on the last platform, the brass instruments and kettle-drums should be arranged. The Choir must by every means be placed before the orchestra, or at least as much so as can be ; and the Solo singers must *on no account* stand behind the orchestra.

The number of instruments and voices must depend of course on the size of the saloon, and on the character of the piece. Far more important than the number is it, to have the different instruments and voices in the right proportion to each other. The general rule is, that, as far as possible, all the parts should be kept in even proportion ; that is, so that no one is covered by the too great preponderance of another. In our Orchestras, a deficiency in this respect often appears in the second violins and violas, which are sacrificed to the first violins ; as the stringed instruments are constantly drowned by the wind instruments. The right proportions would be, about 6 first Violins, 5 second Violins, 3 Altos, 4 Violoncellos, 2 Double Basses, and all the parts for wind instruments single. The wind instruments ought not to be doubled, even though the stringed instruments should be double the above quantity.

In vocal Choruses, the four parts ought to be about equally manned. The Bass voices might be a little more in number, to give more distinctness to that part ; as well as the Alto, which is seldom strong enough, being mostly sung by Sopranos. Care should be taken to have good firm singers on the Alto.

The Orchestra, in accompanying Choruses, ought always to keep in mind that its business is only to support the voices ; and must therefore be subservient, both in power and expression.

The Director has a great responsibility resting on him in this respect also ; and it is to him that the composer looks, for guiding those over whom he holds his sceptre, to keep the right degree and measure.

## SINGING IN THE PRUSSIAN SCHOOLS.

In former numbers of the Magazine, we have given some articles on the introduction of Singing, as a branch of popular education in the public schools of the city of Paris. Our readers are probably aware, that it was not first introduced there ; but had been taught, as one of the regular branches, in the common schools in Switzerland, Prussia, and other parts of Germany, for many years before. The teaching of singing in schools, like most of the modern improvements in education, owes its origin to the celebrated Pestalozzi ; and the method by which it is taught, though it has undergone great changes and improvements, is still very generally called by his name.

It is probably known to most of our readers that Professor C. E. Stowe, of Ohio, in 1836 and 1837, visited "England, Scotland, France, Prussia, and the different States of Germany," for the purpose of becoming acquainted with the systems and methods of education pursued in those countries. Whether he was sent out by the Legislature of Ohio, does not appear ; but he was "requested" by a resolution of that body, "to collect facts and information" on the above subjects, and "to make report thereof to the next General Assembly." On his return, he submitted a report, making a pamphlet of about seventy pages ; which document the Legislature of Massachusetts did themselves the credit to reprint. This is a most interesting document : we do not, however, refer to it here, on account of its interest to general education ; but only for the purpose of quoting from it the few paragraphs which relate to that branch of education, which it is one of the chief objects of this Magazine to promote.

"The universal success and very beneficial results, with which the arts of drawing and designing, *vocal and instrumental music*, moral instruction and the Bible, have been introduced into schools, was another fact peculiarly interesting to me. I asked all the teachers with whom I conversed, whether they did not sometimes find children who were actually incapable of learning to draw and to *sing*. I have had but one reply, and that was, that they found the same diversity of natural talent in regard to these as in regard to reading, writing, and the other branches of education ; but they had never seen a child that was capable of learning to read and write, who could not be taught to *sing well* and draw neatly, and that too without taking any time which would at all interfere with, indeed which would not actually promote, his progress in other studies. \* \* \*

"At Berlin, I visited an establishment for the reformation of youthful offenders. As I was passing from room to room with Dr. K., I heard some beautiful voices singing in an adjoining apartment, and on entering I found about twenty of the boys, sitting at a long table, making clothes for the establishment, and singing at their work. The Doctor enjoyed my surprise, and on going out, remarked—'I always keep these little rogues singing at their work, for while the children sing, the devil cannot come among them at all; he can only sit out doors there and growl; but if they stop singing, in the devil comes.' The Bible and the singing of religious hymns, are among the most efficient instruments which he employs for softening the hardened heart, and bringing the vicious and stubborn will to docility. \* \* \* \* \*

"The method of teaching music has already been successfully introduced\* into our own State, and whoever visits the schools of Messrs. Mason or Solomon, in Cincinnati, will have a much better idea of what it is than any description can give; nor will any one who visits these schools entertain a doubt, that *all children*, from six to ten years of age, who are capable of learning to read, *are capable of learning to sing*, and that this branch of instruction can be introduced into all our common schools with the greatest advantage, not only to the comfort and discipline of the pupils, but also to their progress in their other studies.

"The students are taught from the black-board. The different sounds are represented by lines of different lengths, by letters, by figures, and by musical notes; and the pupils are thoroughly drilled on each successive principle before proceeding to the next."

The following extracts are worthy of notice: since, though music is only mentioned in them incidentally, yet they strongly illustrate its importance as a branch of education, and demonstrate the beneficial influences which may be brought to bear by means of it on the young mind. In describing the teaching of the Elements of Reading, he says:

"The first step is to exercise the organs of *sound*, till they have perfect command of their *vocal powers*, and this, after the previous discipline in conversation and *singing*, is a task soon accomplished."

#### *Again, describing the moral and religious exercises:*

"The teacher may then read them the description of the garden of Eden in the second chapter of Genesis; *sing a hymn with them*, the imagery of which is taken from the fruits and blossoms of a garden; and explain to them how kind and bountiful God is, who gives us such wholesome plants and fruits, and such beautiful flowers, for our nourishment and gratification."

\* By means of the Boston Academy's Manual, compiled by Mr. Mason.

Other instances of the same :

"The external heavens also make an interesting lesson. \* \* \* \* In this connection the teacher may read to them the 18th and 19th Psalms, and other passages of scripture of that kind, *sing with them a hymn*, celebrating the glory of God in the creation, and enforce the moral bearing of such contemplations by appropriate remarks. A very common lesson is, the family and family duties ; love to parents, love to brothers and sisters ; concluding with appropriate passages from scripture, and *singing a family hymn.*"

Again :

"The exercises of the day are always commenced and closed with a short prayer; and the *bible and hymn book* are the first volumes put into the pupil's hands, and these books they always retain and keep in constant use during the whole progress of their education."

Describing a manual labor school, he says :

"At the time of harvest, when they first entered the field to gather the potatoes, before commencing the work, they formed into a circle, and much to the surprise of the superintendent, broke out together into the harvest hymn :

'Now let us all thank God.'

After singing this, they fell to their work with great cheerfulness and vigor."

When shall we experience these beneficial results in our New England Schools ?

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#### THE PIANO-FORTES OF MR. PAPE, OF PARIS.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN FOR THE MUSICAL MAGAZINE.]

When Mr. Pape conceived the idea twelve years ago, of putting the mechanism of his piano-fortes above the strings, several artists and piano-forte makers declared that he never would succeed in it to satisfaction. A heavy touch was particularly anticipated. Mr. Fétis, in his *Revue Musicale*, refuted in several articles the objections raised against this plan, and proved that the tones must come out much clearer and purer, when the hammers struck the strings from above towards the sounding board, than when they lift them from their position, by striking them in the usual manner from below.

His last article is well worthy of public notice, and we take from it the most important parts. Mr. Pape has by continued study re-

markably simplified his invention. He has provided for the greatest durability, by sinking the sounding board more to the bottom of the instrument, by which means the pressure of the strings is at the strongest part of the case, and above them the full space left for the best disposition of the mechanism, to give it room for full unimpeded action. This improvement has the advantage, that the heavy cases and the iron frames, used in common instruments, are altogether dispensed with in Mr. Pape's instruments. The objections on account of the heavy touch that was anticipated, are now altogether refuted, by the experience that the touch of his instruments is as easy as that of the best and most easy piano-fortes; having the additional advantage, that every degree of forte and piano can be produced at will. Their tone is full, energetic and beautiful. The prejudice, that the spiral spring which lifts the hammers would soon be weakened by use, has given way to experience. Mr. Fétis gives the following proof of the durability of these instruments. In the Conservatory at Brussels, one of his square instruments has been in use for five years, being used daily for eight hours, and sometimes in the most unmerciful manner: nevertheless, it is entirely unaltered in tone and mechanism; every thing comes out as distinct and exact, as at the beginning.

The inventor of this new construction is continually employed in improving the mechanism in all its parts, down to the smallest details. One of his latest improvements consists in covering that part where the key moves on the pin, with a piece of leather regulated by a screw; by which means the noise, so commonly made by the keys, is entirely prevented. Indeed, his square piano-fortes enjoy a great, and wide-spread reputation. His grand piano-fortes, and his newly invented piano tables, are of the same excellence. The object of his continued study is simplicity and firmness of construction, with proper regard for beautiful and full tone. In his latest instruments, the bridge upon which the chords are stretched *from one end of the instrument to the other*, runs on a plain floor, without cavities, frames or iron bar. By this means, the case is shortened, and yet the length of the strings is retained. The power of draft in the strings is by this construction further diminished by about five eighths; they being applied in that place where the resistance is the strongest. This gives also the greatest guaranty for the durability of these instruments; which, thus shortened, and freed from every thing superfluous, weigh nearly two hundred pounds less than

the common instrument. The whole mechanism is wonderfully simple, giving altogether but half the number and weight of pieces as in common piano-fortes. The keys are not half as long as common ; besides, as they strike the strings directly by means of a clapper, they have but *one friction*, whereas they commonly have from five to seven. By this construction, the fulcrum, which is brought very near to that part of the keys, where the player touches them, gives a touch as precise as it is easy. In addition to this, every tuner can take off this simple mechanism, as well as put it back and arrange it, in a few minutes. Even if by an unexpected accident any thing should be broken or displaced, the mechanism can, without any preparation or alteration, be immediately replaced by that of any other piano-forte of this construction. These advantages are well worth a general consideration.

The little piano-table of Mr. Pape is in form and size like an eight cornered table. By lifting up the upper part, the keys appear drawn out on rollers as far as the part which is played upon. The touch is easy and commodious ; and the tone is fuller and more singing than in the little Cabinet Pianos, and truly astonishing in proportion to the small size of the instrument. The mechanism is as simple and durable as in his grand and square piano-fortes. This pretty instrument would be a beautiful piece of furniture for parlors. Mr. Fétis thinks the present construction of Mr. Pape's piano-fortes so perfect, that nothing but a few trifling things can be added to it ; and it thus claims the most careful examination of all skilful piano-forte makers, and the attention of all piano-forte players.

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#### THE BEST MEANS OF COVERING THE KEYS OF WIND INSTRUMENTS.

[TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN.]

It is generally known that the keys of the wood and brass wind instruments must cover the holes air tight ; and as generally, that for this purpose the instrument-makers use leather, if the owner does not expressly order otherwise. Every player on a wind instrument knows by experience, that the leather will not last long. Experiments have been tried in vain to remedy this evil ; even the cy-

Under keys do not keep air tight, unless made in a *very* superior manner. *Cork* is the best material for covering the keys. This proposition is not new, but by far too little in general use. It must therefore be either unknown to many instrument-makers, or the mode of application must not be familiar to them ; if not, we should not have so many wind instruments with keys inlaid with leather instead of cork : the latter lasts for a long time, and saves the solo player many times from the danger of not succeeding in his tone. Mr. Lindeman, who has improved the *Corno di Bassetto*, applied cork to his instrument eight years ago ; and it is still in good condition, and bids fair to remain so for a long time. This durable air-tight cover is too important a matter not to be brought to general knowledge. The whole preparation is also much recommended by its simplicity ; every one may easily learn it. Mr. Lindeman takes cork that is not porous, (white cork is the best, but even common corks may do) ; he boils it for some time, dries it carefully, and beats it with a hammer ; but very cautiously, so as not to cause rents in the cork. He then cuts out slices, such as he wants for the keys, with a sharp knife. If the pieces are not altogether of even thickness, as is required, they are ground by a fine file, or on an entirely straight piece of pumice-stone. The cork must be entirely dry, and not damp, when it is ground. The piece is then fastened to the key, as the leather is, with sealing wax. Gum arabic, or any preparation of that kind, must of course not be taken, on account of the moisture which unavoidably collects on the keys. Only one key is taken out at a time to be covered with cork. After fixing it, it is smeared over with oil ; and the key is put into the instrument, firmly pressed on it, and wound around with twine : in this condition the instrument is put aside for a while, until the cork is pressed into the hole, and has assumed the proper form for covering it. Then a second key is taken out, and covered in the same way, and so on.

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#### MISCELLANEOUS GLEANINGS.

FROM THE MUSICAL LIBRARY.

**C. M. von Weber.** Among many proofs of the superior understanding of Weber, was that of his always suiting the sound to the sense. "In one of the pieces in Oberon, Miss Paton (now Mrs. Wood) with all her taste and execution, failed to produce the effect

intended by the composer. ‘I know not how it is,’ said she, ‘but I can never do this as it should be.’ ‘The reason is,’ replied Weber, ‘because you have not studied words.’

“A grander instance of his feeling and judgment was given when a hymn to the Deity was rehearsing. Some of the voices were much too noisy. ‘Hush! hush!’ exclaimed the genuine master; ‘Hush! if you were in the presence of God would you speak so loud?’

“His anxiety to do justice to any subject on which he was engaged will be made evident by the fact, that before he would undertake the composition of some verses from Moore’s *Lalla Rookh*, he insisted on reading the whole poem, which he had never seen before. The perusal of it impressed him with the highest admiration of his talents, and he intimated a strong desire to be introduced to him.”

THE CHACONNE, or CIACONA, was a grave, grand dance, much in use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, though now only known as a musical movement; it is always in three-crotchet time and generally on a ground-base.

BERTINI—FERDINAND HILLER—CHOPIN—LISZT. *Modern Romantic School of Piano-forte Playing.*—Bertini is no improvisatore on the piano-forte, who compresses the bold thoughts of his mind within narrow limits; he is a powerful and energetic artist, who develops an idea, and by degrees brings it out like a seriously and long considered work. It is not the surface but the inmost recesses of our hearts, which he affects; and while gracefulness is a characteristic feature, strength and energy are no less predominant. The ode is more peculiarly his forte than the elegy.

Hiller is the nursling of German harmony, jealous of his own originality, deep, reflecting, but with a conception brightened by a southern ray. His playing and composition may frequently be likened to a northern dream, related by a dramatic poet, with all the purity of attic elegance. He acquires celebrity by his chiaroscuro, like Rubens; he is thrifty to a fault; his lights are unbroken, and he introduces no false lights or forced contrasts. In the fanciful and mystic he cannot compete with Mendelssohn Bartholdy, but he may in matter of fact reality. He will be the little Beethoven, as the poet Heine has already designated him.

Chopin’s expressive play, his harmony, ardent and often obscure, though invariably genuine, as if what should have preceded had

been omitted,—how are these to be depicted? The causes of his joy and sorrow remain veiled; nothing but individual originality; superficial organizations only can be insensible of his magnetic influence. His talent is not a mere instinct without experience and intuition, but embraces at once the mysteries of music and of the heart. His style and his playing are equally great.

With Liszt, his play is all in all; he is the genius of performance. All expedients to put on a semblance of inspiration are spurned by him. His inspiration can proceed only from the innate existence of his own creative powers, which are equal to those of composition. The universal stirring of the age has with its other emancipations produced him. Even raillery has in vain been directed against him; and envy he will overcome, even as he has overcome his instrument. Whence does this arise? He has turned his attention to all the arts and sciences, trodden their path for the benefit of his art, to load her with all the riches of the intellectual world. If he reflects Beethoven so admirably, it is because he no less thoroughly fathoms Shakspeare, Goethe, Schiller and Victor Hugo; because he comprehends the composer of Fidelio more even in his genius than in his works. Liszt is Beethoven's hand. The softest emotions of Beethoven's soul he expresses with his fingers. This he has only attained by the powerful wings of poetry, which elevate the arts, and which henceforth will be the line of distinction between the musical artisan and the real artist.

FROM BEETHOVEN'S WILL. How was it possible for me to be continually saying to people, "Speak louder; keep up your voice, for I am deaf!" Alas! how was it possible for me to submit to the continual necessity of exposing the failure of one of my faculties, which, but for mismanagement, I might have shared in common with the rest of my fellow creatures; a faculty too that I once possessed in the fullest perfection; indeed, in a greater degree than most of those of my own profession.

In this state I remained a full half year, when a blundering doctor persuaded me, that the best thing I could do to recover my hearing, would be to go into the country. Here, incited by my natural disposition, I was induced to join in the society of my neighbors. But how bitter was the mortification I experienced, when some one near me would stand listening to the tones of a flute, which I could not hear, or to the shepherd's song sounding from the valley, not one note of which I could distinguish! Such occurrences had the effect of driving me almost to despair, nay, even raised gloomy

thoughts in my mind of seeking relief in self-destruction. It was nothing but my art that restrained me; it appeared impossible for me to quit the world, till I had accomplished the objects I felt myself, as it were, destined to fulfil.

**BEETHOVEN'S SYMPHONIA EROICA.**—Beethoven's Symphony, written, he tells us, to *celebrate* the death of a hero—("composta per celebrare la morte d'un Eroe,") has nothing in it, according to notions generally entertained, of the funereal or sorrowful character, except the march. Rather the contrary, for the scherzo, the trio, and the finale, exhibit a vivacity almost amounting to playfulness; and even the first movement is far from grave. But Beethoven never sat down to compose without intending to describe something; and, as his mind was differently constituted from that of most people, it is possible, nay, pretty certain, that the whole of this work is an accurate representation of some well conceived and well connected train of ideas, however he may have differed from others in his mode of giving a musical form to them. The whole is, past all dispute, the creation of a mighty genius.

The funeral march goes deeply to the heart of all who are sensible to the effects of music. The change in this from minor to major is almost transporting; and the recurrence to the subject hardly less affecting. The Scherzo hurries the hearer along with it, increasing his surprise at every bar, which does not abate during the progress of the last equally original and extraordinary movement.

**ANCIENT COMPOSERS.**—I know not of any really great composer, or even performer, who has not been grounded on the works of the ancient masters. Rossini has been mentioned as an exception, only, however, by those who overlook the fact, or are ignorant of it, that, like all musicians professing the Catholic faith, he was from his infancy in the habit of hearing the fine masses of the early writers, whence enough may be learnt to form an excellent basis of musical knowledge. But we also know that he was acquainted with Corelli's works soon after he had written his first opera. And it cannot be too often repeated, that Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven were warm admirers of Handel, the two latter to enthusiasm.

**HANDEL'S ISRAEL IN EGYPT.**—In this grand choral work, Handel's supremacy in the most dignified branch is so manifest, that no one has ever yet been set up as his competitor. The only defect of this wonderful effort of genius is, that it throws every thing of the kind by other composers into shade, and lessens the pleasure other-

wise derivable from productions of great positive merit. After such an Oratorio, all Choruses but Handel's seem vapid, till time has weakened the impression his leave; and both justice and good policy demand that a long interval should be allowed to elapse between the hearing of so matchless a work, and any thing of the same high class, from the pen of any other master, ancient or modern.

**CANVASSING IN MUSICAL SOCIETIES.**—In the *Athenæum*, I find the following observation :—

“A recent addition to the number of the members of the Philharmonic Society has recalled to us, by contrast, the circumstances of the blackballing of Moscheles. Have the electors any standard of admission? or do matters go by *demerit*? These things require revision.”

The Philharmonic Society is, I fear, fast approaching that state in which it will no longer be useful; perhaps much the worse. Canvassing for the office of director is a baneful practice; it introduces very inadequate persons: and procuring the election of members by the same means is still more injurious, by bringing in those who have no claim, and excluding others that ought to be admitted, who would prove highly serviceable, but cannot stoop to solicit votes. In truth, the **Society** is in great danger of becoming a rank job.

**HANDEL'S WATER-MUSIC.**—Handel, having offended, by much neglecting, George I, while elector of Hanover, his noble friend, the Baron of Kielmannsegge, hit upon the following plan to reinstate him in the king's favor. The king was persuaded to form a party on the water. Handel was apprized of the design, and advised to prepare some music for the occasion. It was conducted by himself, unknown to his Majesty, whose pleasure on hearing it was equal to his surprise. He was impatient to know whose it was, and how this entertainment came to be provided without his knowledge. The Baron then produced the delinquent, and asked leave to present him to his majesty, as one that was too conscious of his fault to attempt an excuse for it, but sincerely desirous to atone for the same by all possible demonstrations of duty, submission, and gratitude. This intercession was accepted without any difficulty. Handel was restored to favor, and his music honored with the highest expressions of the royal approbation. As a token of it, the king was pleased to add a pension for life, of £200 a year, to that (£200) which Queen Anne had before given him.